

SIGNATURE J

WINTER ISSUE

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MINUTE

EXPRESS

WORKOUT

PROVERBIAL

WOMAN SERIES

FASHION

TRENDS

Perfect Portrait

Simmie Knox

(no such thing as a
perfect portrait)

MERRELL

HOLLIS

THE

ULTIMATE

STYLE

CONNOISSEUR

PLUS

FLORI ROBERTS

BRIAN CULBERTSON

TYE TRIBBETT

LAQUAN SMITH

ROBIN WILSON

DAYMOND JOHN

AN ENTREPRENEURIAL CHAMPION SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

Robin

A Modern
Trailblazer in the
World of Green

Interviewed by Cynthia Orr
Written by Malinda J. Pernell

Wilson



Door Style: Riverside **Door Construction:** Mitered **Material:** Maple **Finish:** Antique White
Photo Credit: Kitchen Kraft, Inc OH

Using her personal experiences dealing with asthma and allergies as her platform, eco-friendly interior design expert Robin Wilson built a successful practice promoting sustainable and healthy living environments. As the first woman to license her name to eco-friendly custom cabinetry, Wilson is known for her focus on creating design spaces based on sustainable, reusable, recyclable and non-toxic solutions. "Eco-friendly design is about wellness," states Wilson. "It is about the connection between health and environment." A pioneer in the green movement, Wilson developed a prominent brand that advocates eco-awareness and healthy lifestyle initiatives for the home environment.

Door Style: Riverside **Door Construction:** Mitered **Material:** Maple **Finish:** Antique White
Drawer: Paneled **Photo Credit:** Kitchen Kraft, Inc OH



As the founder of the New York-based Robin Wilson Home, an eco-friendly residential and commercial interior design and consulting firm, Wilson acknowledges that it is a calling that evolved. "As a child, I enjoyed rearranging spaces," she says. "But, I was dissuaded from pursuing interior design as a career." After earning a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Texas in Austin, Wilson held various positions in the areas of management consulting and executive search. In 1999, the firm in which she was employed went public, and Wilson sold her company shares, using the money for her graduate studies in real estate finance at New York University. Although previously redirected from pursuing her passion, she never forgot her career goals. Wilson eventually started her project management company in 2000. Her business quickly expanded after managing small construction projects for friends who then made referrals to her. "It was an easy job for me because of my skills set of multi-tasking and communications," says Wilson. Ten years later, project manage-

ment is a fundamental component of design for her residential and commercial clients.

Passionate about generating excitement and creating awareness about the beauty of eco-friendly designs, Wilson lives what she advocates. Her brand for the conscientious consumer is built on the principles of eco-friendliness that embraces working with reusable, nontoxic, recyclable, sustainable products and practicing responsible construction and renovation. "Your home is your eco-system," says Wilson. "The bottom line is your home is where you spend 30 percent of your life, encompassing how you live, sleep, eat and entertain." Wilson explains that many people take indoor air quality and the products they use for granted. "The reality is that the air indoors can affect your health," she states. "Many people do not realize that their wall insulation, paint or mattress could be toxic." Wilson promotes the correlation of making healthy choices for the home environment to keeping the family healthy.



(Upper Photo) Door Style: Seattle Door Construction: Flat Panel Material: Hickory Finish: Natural Drawer: Paneled
 Photo Credit: Selin Custom Kitchens IL (Left Photo) Material: Hickory Finish: Natural Drawer: Slab
 Photo Credit: Selin Custom Kitchens, IL



is different. One of the most challenging aspects of any project is to understand the goals of the client. While she has designed several high-profile projects, one assignment that she is very proud of is a medical facility that provides prenatal and testing services for women and girls in Brooklyn, New York. "This project was very rewarding because of the reduced fees to refurbish," states Wilson. In general, her satisfaction is the ability to assist people in the transformation of their space, with the WOW moment being the reveal of the finished green space. Her other notable projects include the Good Housekeeping

LEED-certified brownstone in 2008, the Esquire "Ultimate Bachelor Apartment" terrace in 2007, the Peninsula Hotel Spa Salon in 2007 and multiple renovation projects for the Harlem office of former President Bill Clinton since 2004. A respected authority in eco-friendly interior design alternatives, Wilson has made countless guest appearances on many programs including the TODAY show, CBS Early Show, Good Morning America Now, PBS Nightly Business News, CNN, FOX Business, and HGTV. Her design work has been featured in such publications as House Beautiful, Reader's

Wilson emphasizes that each project is unique and each client

Digest, Wall Street Journal, Home Furnishings, Good Housekeeping and O at Home. Wilson, as an entrepreneur and public speaker, has been recognized and participated in various forums such as a panelist in the 2010 Aspen Institute Environment Forum; a panelist in the 2009 Harvard Business School Dynamic Women in Business Conference; a 2008 AMEX and Count Me In "Make Mine a Million \$ Business" Award Recipient; and Black Enterprise Magazine 2007 Innovator of the Year.



Door Style: Riverside **Door Construction:** Mitered **Material:** Maple **Finish:** Mocha, Sandalwood **Drawer:** Paneled **Photo Credit:** Unique Custom Cabinetry OH



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Rebranded Robin Wilson Home in 2006, the firm is a member of the Sustainable Furnishings Council and the U.S. Green Building Council. Because of her work on various LEED projects, Wilson has a thorough understanding and familiarity of those requirements and encourages her clients to implement cost-effective, green solutions and standards. Her multi-dimensional brand recently expanded to include her first licensing endeavor with Holiday Kitchens, a 65-year old company in the United States known for its sustainable practices and lifetime warranties. The line of eco-friendly, kitchen cabinetry is available through more than 400 dealers throughout the country. And, in 2008, she launched her online store, The Nest Store (theneststore.com), featuring affordable products

such as dishware, baby items and other household goods.

In the business of interior design, Wilson says that one must possess business skills and a creative mindset, with the ability to balance both. However, the key to fulfilling any professional goal is to follow your passion or dream no matter what others may say or the obstacles you may encounter. "Set goals and position yourself to achieve them," she states. "Life is precious, and it is about living now." It is a philosophy Wilson truly embraces, personally and professionally.

For more information on Robin Wilson Home, please visit www.robinwilsonhome.com.

Practical, Yet Affordable, Tips to Achieve a More **Eco-Friendly** Home



Light Bulbs

Change your light bulbs to energy efficient options such as LED bulbs that last longer and can lower your electric bills because they do not generate heat. CFL light bulbs contain mercury, and you will need to dispose them properly to avoid contaminating waterway.

Pillow

Wash your pillow. "There are some people who have slept on their pillows for six years without washing them," states Wilson. "It is like wearing the same, unwashed pair of pajamas for six years." She recommends washing your pillow every six months in hot water and giving them to an animal shelter after two to three years.



Wilson also suggested removing your shoes in the entry to avoid tracking dirt or pesticides into your living space.



Shower Curtain

Change your vinyl shower curtain to nylon as it is mildew-resistant.

Toilet

Close the toilet lid when you flush. It has been scientifically documented that flushing creates a two to four foot toilet spray of particles in your bathroom.



Cleaners

Use affordable non-toxic cleaning products.

